360 of SEQ ID NO:3 or from position 41 to position 487 of SEQ ID NO:4;

(c) a nucleotide sequence encoding the soluble extracellular domain of a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence as in positions 1-360 of SEQ ID NO:3 or positions 1-487 of SEQ ID NO:4; and

(d) a nucleotide sequence complementary to any of the nucleotide sequences in (a), (b) or (c) above.

21. An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a polynucleotide having a nucleotide sequence at least 90% identical to a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a portion of SEQ ID NOS:3 or 4, wherein said portion lacks from 30 to 50 amino acids from the amino terminus of said complete amino acid sequence as in SEQ ID NO:3 or 4;

(b) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a portion of amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3 or 4 wherein said portion lacks from 131 to 171 amino acids from the carboxy-terminus of said complete amino acid sequence as in SEQ ID NO:3 or 4; and

c) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a portion of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3 or 4 wherein said portion includes a combination of any of the amino terminal and carboxy terminal deletions according to (a) and (b), above.

22. A substantially pure polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence at least 70% identical to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(a) the amino acid sequence of a full-length polypeptide having the complete amino acid sequence as in

SEQ ID NO:3 or 4;

(b) the amino acid sequence comprising a portion of the complete amino acid sequence as in SEQ ID NO:3 or 4 wherein said portion lacks from 30-50 amino acids from the amino terminus of said complete amino acid sequence.

(c) the amino acid sequence comprising a portion of the complete amino acid sequence as in SEQ ID NO:3 or 4 wherein said portion lacks from 131-171 amino acids from the carboxy-terminus of said complete amino acid sequence.

(d) the amino acid sequence comprising a portion of the complete amino acid sequence as in SEQ ID NO:3 or 4 wherein said portion is the result of a combination of any of the amino-terminal and carboxy-terminal deletions according to (b) and (c), above.

23. A method of treating obesity and diseases and disorders associated with obesity comprising administering to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of the polypeptide as claimed in claim 22, or an antagonist thereof.

24. A chimeric protein comprising the polypeptide of Claim 22 fused to a heterologous polypeptide.

25. The chimeric protein of Claim 24 in which the heterologous polypeptide is a constant region of an immunoglobulin.

26. A pharmaceutical formulation containing as an active ingredient a composition as claimed in Claim ~~4 or 12.~~ 22

27. Method of treating obesity or obesity related diseases by administering a pharmaceutical formulation as claimed in Claim 26.

28. The use of a composition as claimed in Claim ~~4 or 12~~ 22 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of obesity and/or obesity- related disorders.

29. A pharmaceutical formulation adapted for the treatment of obesity and/or obesity- related disorders containing a composition as claimed in Claim ~~4 or 12~~. 22